GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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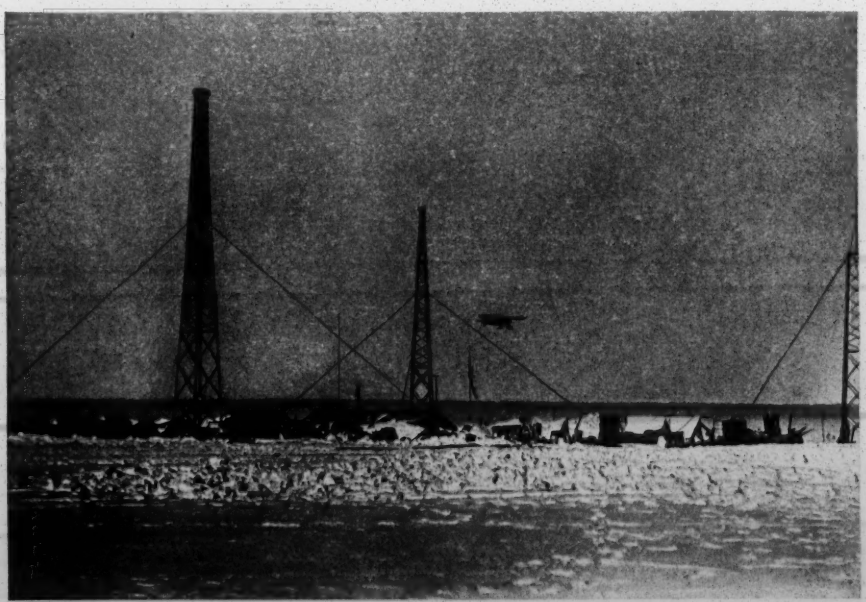
General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

Contents for Week of October 30, 1933. Vol. XII. No. 17.

1. Little America, Antarctica, Gets a Postmaster!
2. The Austrian Tyrol, Pivot of European Intrigue.
3. Cork, a Material Used to the Last Crumb.
4. It's "Mexico, D. F."; Not "Mexico City."
5. Llandudno Honors Author of "Alice in Wonderland."



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THE FIRST "LITTLE AMERICA" UNDER CONSTRUCTION

To give stamp collectors a new thrill the U. S. Post Office Department will establish the farthest south post office in the world at Little America, Admiral Byrd's base in the Antarctic. This photograph of the base camp of the first Byrd Expedition was made before its completion and when some of the supplies were still in tents (See Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

The Geographic News Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (in stamps or money order). Entered as second-class matter, January 27, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 9, 1922.

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Little America, Antarctica, Gets a Postmaster!

TENS of thousands of collectors of stamps in all parts of the world have been interested by the announcement of Postmaster General James A. Farley that a post office will be established at the world's southernmost "settlement," Little America, Antarctica.

This unique post office will be a part of the Second Byrd Antarctic Expedition, led by Rear-Admiral Richard E. Byrd, which has just sailed for two years of scientific work in the area of the South Pole.

Associate Editor of National Geographic Magazine

Dr. John Oliver La Gorce, of Washington, D. C., has been appointed Postmaster of Little America. Dr. La Gorce is the Vice President of the National Geographic Society and Associate Editor of the *National Geographic Magazine*, widely known as a world traveler, writer and editor. His appointment by the Federal Government to this post will be of interest to the more than one million members of this Society, and to thousands of teachers and students who weekly receive the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS throughout the Nation.

Dr. La Gorce's appointment will not make necessary his traveling to Little America. He has sworn in an Assistant Postmaster, Leroy Clark, a staff member of Admiral Byrd's Expedition, who will establish the post office at Little America upon arrival in Antarctica.

A special three-cent stamp has been issued by the Government in honor of the Byrd Expedition, and placed on sale only at the Philatelic Agency, Post Office Department, Washington, D. C. More than 40,000 letters were placed aboard the Expedition's vessel at Norfolk, Virginia.

How to Send a Letter to Little America

To meet the expense of transporting mail to and from the United States and its handling, a charge of fifty-three cents is made for each letter, *including* the special stamp. The Post Office Department receives the three cents, and the Expedition the fifty cents on each letter.

As many letters as desired may be sent by those wishing to secure cancellations at the South Pole Post Office. You may address letters to yourself, or to friends.

The addressed letters (without stamps) should be enclosed in another envelope with the usual postage affixed, addressed to the "Byrd Antarctic Expedition, c/o Postmaster, Washington, D. C., inclosing a post office money order payable to Byrd Antarctic Expedition, Washington, D. C., for fifty-three cents for each letter enclosed. The Expedition stamps will be placed on the letters *in Washington* and the letters forwarded to the Little America Post Office for postmarking and return.

Provision has been made to have letters received in Washington up to November 10, 1933, forwarded by regular fast mail steamer to Dunedin, New Zealand, in time to be transferred to the Expedition ship, at that point, before its departure for Little America.

The return letters to addressees from the world's southernmost post office will be sent out by supply ships to New Zealand and will be received in the United States in the early summer of 1934.

Letters will continue to be received in Washington for transfer to Little America as late as November 1, 1934, the latest date mail can be forwarded to

UMI

Photograph by Robert Reid

WELSH COSTUMES SUGGEST HALLOWE'EN DRESS

The tall, glossy beavers, black aprons, and wide skirts of the national costume of Wales are seldom seen to-day except at the great Welsh festivals of song and poetry—the Eisteddfodau. Wales, however, has managed to preserve its strange language and many of its quaint folk tales and traditions. Only its larger cities and seacoast resorts have the atmosphere of typically English places (See Bulletin No. 5).

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The Austrian Tyrol, Pivot of European Intrigue

THE eyes of Europe are upon the Tyrol, that long, narrow panhandle of western Austria wedged between Italy and Germany. Unable to stand alone politically and economically, Austria has been wavering between Rome and the Reich, with the Tyrol a pivot of intrigue.

The Austrian Tyrol, shrunken in size by the fortunes of war, to-day consists merely of a mountainous arm of Austria thrust in between the Swiss, German, and Italian Alps. Briefly it might be called the valley of the River Inn, with the nearby ranges and defiles. The "South Tyrol" of pre-war days is no more, but has become the "Alto Adige" of Italy.

Innsbruck Center of Art and Learning

Although small in area Tyrol looms large in European history and art. Innsbruck, the capital, was an ancient seat of a branch of the House of Hapsburg, and under Emperor Maximilian I flourished as a center of government and learning.

The son of Maximilian married a daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, of Spain, patrons of Columbus. The great emperor lies buried in the ancient church at Innsbruck, surrounded by statues of his two wives and his relatives. Stories of their lives combined would form the European history of the day. In the same church is the tomb of the innkeeper patriot and defender of Tyrolese freedom, Andreas Hofer.

The Empress Maria Theresa, mother of the ill-fated French queen, Marie Antoinette, spent much time in this part of her dominions. The principal street of Innsbruck bears her name and there is an arch built in her honor.

This quaint little city of about seventy thousand people is a delight to the lovers of old houses. In the older sections, narrow streets are bordered by tall houses with dormer windows and gabled roofs. At one corner there is a rather plain house with a carved and painted two-storied, Gothic balcony, topped by a gilded tile roof, dating back to a count of Tyrol, nicknamed "Empty Pockets" because he spent all his money building fancy houses. This is the famous House of the Golden Roof.

Mountains Rise from Backyards of the Town

The streets of Innsbruck seem to end in the very mountains themselves, which rise on all sides in jagged, grey peaks high above the town, many showing snowy summits even in summer. Ranges on the south side are a bit more friendly and less forbidding.

Austrians are fond of mountain climbing and there are many Alpine clubs organized to promote the sport. On holidays during the summer season hikers overflow railway stations en route to favorite peaks. Their costume consists of jacket and flapping short leather breeches, rolled stockings, that leave much of the leg bare, and on the shoulders a knapsack. This ensemble is surmounted by a felt hat into which is stuck the chamois tail, which valued ornament is like nothing so much as a shaving brush.

Alpine clubs have erected rest huts far up remote valleys and provide their members with charts of difficult passages. Younger members are trained on easier peaks, progressing with an increase of skill to almost vertical heights. Thus

UMI

reach the Antarctica Post Office by supply ships before the Expedition finally leaves its base to return to America.

Note: Classes following the activities of the Byrd Expedition should also consult: "Conquest of Antarctica by Air," *National Geographic Magazine*, August, 1930; and "Mapping the Antarctic from the Air," October, 1932.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN: "Admiral Byrd Takes Dogs as Well as Planes to Antarctic," week of October 16, 1933.

Bulletin No. 1, October 30, 1933.

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School Service Department,
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Kindly send ..... copies weekly of the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS, for classroom use, to

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LITTLE AMERICA'S POSTMASTER IN HIS WASHINGTON, D. C., OFFICE

Dr. John Oliver La Gorce, Vice President of the National Geographic Society and Associate Editor of the National Geographic Magazine, who has been appointed by Postmaster General Farley to be responsible for mails reaching and leaving the world's southernmost post office. The office will be housed in a snow dug-out on the Ross Shelf Ice at the base headquarters of the second Byrd Antarctic Expedition. Leroy Clark, a member of the executive staff of the Expedition, will be assistant postmaster at Little America.

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Cork, a Material Used to the Last Crumb

DESPITE the fact that metal caps, and glass and rubber plugs have elbowed cork from the place it once held as the king of bottle stoppers, more than 200,000 tons of cork annually is required to supply the world's demands.

Even the crimped bottle cap, which made one of the worst assaults on the cork stopper, is lined with cork; and glass stoppers often are inserted into thin-walled cylinders of cork in the necks of bottles.

Although cork is not a domestic product, an American, strolling down a busy street, boating on American waterways, or motoring on American highways, is seldom out of arm's reach of this "light overcoat" of certain oak trees.

Shoe Soles, Gasoline Gauges, and Gaskets

Cork is hidden in the soles of shoes in the form of insoles; yachtsmen carry cork life preservers and ring buoys for the safety of guests; many motorists depend on cork floats in their gasoline tanks to measure their gasoline supply; and cork washers and gaskets are used in the joints of their motors to make them air-, water-, and oil-tight.

A cork bobber attached to his line tells the fisherman of a "bite"; women adorn their fur coats with cork buttons; opticians make eyeglasses more comfortable by placing thin cork strips on the nose piece; and cork-tipped cigarettes are preferred by some smokers. Many pen holders are entirely covered with cork or are merely tipped with it, while cork affords a good grip on fishing rods, bicycle handle bars, and tool handles.

In the manufacture of "whole cork" products, about 65 per cent of the raw material that starts through a factory becomes scrap, but every crumb of scrap is used. Ground to a flourlike fineness, cork is an important part of linoleum. Coarser particles are deposited between the walls of ice boxes, water coolers, and cold storage plants to keep out heat.

Trees Produce Longer than Century

Pressed into boards, cork also is used to line walls of cold storage plants and as insulation (a means of preventing the passage of heat or sound) in walls and floors of some modern buildings. Pressed into tiles, it is used as decorative floor covering. Fruits, china, eggs, and many other fragile products are packed in cork.

Cork is the outer bark of a cork oak, of which there are vast forests in Portugal, Spain, and North Africa. A tree must be about twenty years old before it gives its first or so-called virgin cork. Virgin cork is of little commercial value. The next harvest of cork is not ready for stripping for nearly 10 years, but this stripping too is of little commercial value. When a tree reaches the age of forty years, its bark may be called high-grade cork. Cork oaks produce for more than a century.

When an oak is ready to be "skinned alive" it is attacked with a huge knife in the hands of an expert (see illustration, next page). If the knife penetrates the inner covering beneath the bark, the tree is likely to be injured; but the careful removal of the outer bark does not retard growth.

Cylinder-shaped, like the tree from which it has been stripped, the bark is taken to a "boiling station" where tannin is removed by boiling in water. The boiling adds elasticity to cork, makes it soft and pliable, and flattens it.

The coarse, dark exterior is scraped off before cork is baled for shipping. In Spain, a large part of the cork is sent to Spanish factories where it is made into

UMI

high mountain ranges have become a great national playground and a source of health and strength to the nation.

Tyrolese peasantry are notably a sturdy race. Hard toil is required to wring a living from the narrow valleys and hillside farms, but struggle with nature has not marred the peaceful aspect of the countryside. Wide-eaved farm houses dot a landscape musical with the tinkle of cow bells.

Great crucifixes at the cross roads indicate the religious nature of the peasantry. Above every village rises the spire of the parish church. Until recently each valley had its own details of custom and costume.

Yodeling Is a Family Amusement

For over a century Tyrolese yodelers have been heard on the concert and vaudeville stage of Europe and America. The first Tyrolese to popularize the yodel in the theater made a fortune in England by so doing, and, returning to his native land, purchased a castle and retired in wealth.

This form of vocalization was perfected at family concerts organized to while away the long winter evenings in the country. It thus became the custom for brothers and sisters, who were noted in their own valley, to go together upon the concert stage in family groups. To find rural music and folk dancing at home the traveler now must go to remote country districts.

Note: Students interested in the colorful costumes of the Tyrol, or in the sports and occupations of this unique mountain land, should consult: "Ballooning in the Stratosphere," *National Geographic Magazine*, March, 1933; "Styria, A Favored Vacation Land of Central Europe," October, 1932; "Entering the Front Doors of Medieval Towns," March, 1932; "Man and Nature Paint Italian Scenes in Prodigal Colors," April, 1928; "The Beauty of the Bavarian Alps," June, 1926; "Vienna—A Capital Without a Nation," January, 1923; "Frontier Cities of Italy," June, 1915; and "Austro-Italian Mountain Frontiers," April, 1915.

Bulletin No. 2, October 30, 1933.

Photograph from Cornelia Stratton Parker

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING IS NOT THE ONLY SPORT OF THE TYROL

The River Inn and other swift streams rising in this part of Austria offer the thrills of "faltboating." A "faltboote," or collapsible boat, is carried by train or bus to the headwaters of the Inn above Innsbruck, and then the paddler has four days of paddling and drifting ahead of him until the Danube is reached at Passau.

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It's "Mexico, D. F."; Not "Mexico City"

PERHAPS you have noticed in recent newspaper datelines "Mexico, D. F.," instead of "Mexico City."

The initials "D. F." stand for *"Distrito Federal,"* the equivalent in the Spanish language of our own "D. C." or "District of Columbia." At the request of the Mexican Government, the United States Government has ruled that all official mail sent to the capital of Mexico shall be marked "Mexico, D. F." American newspapers, business concerns, and organizations such as the National Geographic Society have quickly fallen in line with the Mexican Government's request, and now use "D. F." when they wish to designate the Mexican capital.

The Three Mexicos: Nation, State, and City

The new ruling calls attention to the little-known fact that there are really three "Mexicos" south of the Rio Grande. The entire nation uses the name; a Mexican State partly surrounding the Federal District is also known as Mexico; as is also the capital city itself.

The name "Mexico" was derived from the war god of the tribe of Indians who conquered the beautiful valley in which the present city of Mexico lies. These Indians called the region and its chief city *Tenochtitlan.* This name, which signifies "stone on cactus," proved too much of a mouthful for the Spaniards, who chose instead the name of the tribal god of the Aztecs, *Mexitl.*

To-day Mexico, the nation, is a Federal Republic composed, like our own, of States and Territories. "Los Estados Unidos Mexicanos," or the United Mexican States, is made up of 28 States, two Territories, and one Federal District. In all they spread over 767,198 square miles—equal to more than a quarter of the land area of continental United States.

The United States has one smaller State than Mexico's smallest. Rhode Island is 300 square miles smaller than Tlaxcala, which lies 50 miles east of Mexico City. But the largest State in Mexico, Chihuahua, across the border from New Mexico, is much smaller than the American giant, Texas. Chihuahua is about as large as Oregon, or Illinois and Indiana taken together.

Almost Encircles Federal District

The State of Mexico, with an area of 9,230 square miles (about that of our State of New Jersey), almost surrounds the Federal District, as Maryland does the District of Columbia. The State absorbs much of the overflow population of the capital, and it benefits from the heavy volume of trade by rail and highway that pours into the Federal District from the east, north, and west.

With both plains and mountains, the State of Mexico possesses much beautiful scenery. In addition to the "Valley of Toluca," it includes the famous "Valley of Mexico," the heart of the Republic. Here spread the *haciendas* or estates of wealthy Mexican planters and ranchers, and the sparkling lakes that encircle the Federal District like a necklace of sapphires. In the mountainous western part of the State are rich gold, silver, and lead mines. The Republic's most important river, the Lerma, rises in the State of Mexico and flows westward to Lake Chapala, finally emptying into the Pacific under the name of Rio Santiago.

The Federal District (*Distrito Federal*) has an area of about 578 square miles, or more than eight times that of our own District of Columbia. But unlike

UMI

cork products. Portugal, however, exports most of its cork in the crude state. The United States consumes about one-third of the world production of cork.

Note: For other references to countries where cork is obtained and to methods of treating and shipping cork see: "Seville, More Spanish Than Spain" and "On the Bypaths of Spain," *National Geographic Magazine,* March, 1929; "An Altitudinal Journey Through Portugal," November, 1927; "Across French and Spanish Morocco," March, 1925; "Adventurous Sons of Cadiz," August, 1924; "The Coasts of Corsica," September, 1923; and "The Island of Sardinia and Its People," January, 1923.

Bulletin No. 3, October 30, 1933.

NOTICE TO TEACHERS IN ILLINOIS, OHIO, LOUISIANA, and WASHINGTON (STATE)

The National Geographic Society has available for teachers and students a limited number of copies of the *National Geographic Magazine* (May, 1931; May, 1932; April, 1930; February, 1933) containing the articles describing the above named States. Each article includes more than three score photographs, many in natural color, as well as maps, and data about the industries, resources, customs, and history of the States. While the supply lasts copies of these issues will be sent postpaid, to teachers and students only, in lots of ten or more, at the rate of ten cents (10c) per copy.

For students in history classes the Society will also send copies of the January, 1931, issue of the *National Geographic Magazine,* containing "The Travels of George Washington" (with special map insert), on the same terms.

Photograph from Harriet Chalmers Adams

A CORK OAK BEING "SKINNED ALIVE"

If the heavy bark is cut carefully, no injury is done to the tree. The life of a cork tree in southern Spain, where this picture was taken, is from 80 to 150 years.

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Llandudno Honors Author of "Alice in Wonderland"

WE DO not hear often of Llandudno. Perhaps one explanation is that Llandudno, like other Welsh names, is difficult to pronounce.

But on the sand hills of Llandudno beach "Lewis Carroll," an Oxford mathematics teacher whose real name was Dr. Charles L. Dodgson, once strolled with the children of his host, Dean Liddell. Recently a white marble marker was erected on the west shore of Llandudno to commemorate these walks. Upon it is carved:

> "On this very shore, during happy rambles with little Alice Liddell, Lewis Carroll was inspired to write that literary treasure 'Alice in Wonderland' which has charmed children for generations."

The Atlantic City of Wales

Although Llandudno may sound very foreign to us, it is the Atlantic City of Wales and one of the chief seaside resorts of the British Isles. Situated on the north coast of Wales, facing the Irish Sea, it may be easily reached by thousands of summer visitors from Liverpool, Manchester, and the English Midlands.

The town itself is built around a wide semicircle of firm sandy beach, with the ends of the crescent tipped by two towering masses of rock—the Great Orme's Head and the Little Orme. Neither Nice, nor Deauville, nor Biarritz, nor Scheveningen, nor any of the much-vaunted, middle-Europe bathing resorts on the shores of Hungary's Lake Balaton has a situation comparable to this lovely Welsh watering place.

And the Welsh people have made excellent use of the things which Nature presented. A concrete "boardwalk," wider than New York's Broadway, follows the graceful curve of the beach for more than a mile and a half; countless bathhouses on wheels follow the tide back and forth, drawn up and down the sands by horses; droves of donkeys are provided for the children's rides when they tire of digging in the sand (see illustration, next page); a pier jutting out into the bay for half a mile is the scene of daily concerts and dances, while along its full length are booths of fortune tellers, catch-penny venders, and other lures which attract those on a holiday outing or a vacation.

One of World's Most Scenic Drives

But it is the Marine Drive, chiseled out of the solid rock of Great Orme's Head, winding between sea and sky, and midway along the steep cliff, which brings distinction to Llandudno over all other resorts. No similar stretch of the Corniche Drive along the Riviera can excel it in grandeur.

There are many, many spots which lure the visitor: Happy Valley, nestling in a hollow of the Great Orme, given to the town by Lord Mostyn as a memorial of the Queen Victoria Jubilee; the Church of Our Saviour, in whose grounds Lewis Carroll used to romp with his youthful friend Alice Liddell, whose home was near by; and St. Tudno's Church, a medieval structure occupying the site of the cell of St. Tudno, a hermit of the seventh century who gave his name to Llandudno (*llan* meaning church).

UMI

the District of Columbia, which consists of a single unit, the Mexican Federal District is divided into six prefectures and one municipality, the latter being the capital city of Mexico. The city itself has a population of over 600,000, but, with suburbs in the Federal District, the capital boasts nearly a million inhabitants.

The Federal District rests in the bottom of a huge basin that looks like the greatest volcanic crater in the world. One of the strangest aspects of the city of Mexico is that, though perched a mile or more above sea level near a continental divide, it long diked and drained itself like a seaside town in Holland. It was not until 1900, after centuries of study and work, that the city was made safe from lake overflows. Then the great 30-mile Canal del Desagüe was completed. On it thousands of men worked for years, with teams, trams and steam shovels. It is probably the most spectacular modern engineering feat between the Boulder Dam and the Panama Canal.

Note: For other helpful Mexican references—nation, state, and capital—consult the following in the bound volumes of the *National Geographic Magazine* in your school or local library: "Monte Alban, Richest Archeological Find in America," October, 1932; "Unearthing America's Ancient History," July, 1931; "North America's Oldest Metropolis," July, 1930; "Buenos Aires to Washington by Horse," February, 1929; "To Bogotá and Back by Air," May, 1928; "How Latin America Looks from the Air," October, 1927; "Among the Zapotecs of Mexico," May, 1927; "Chichen Itzá, an Ancient American Mecca," January, 1925; "The Isthmus of Tehuantepec," May, 1924; "Ruins of Cuicuilco May Revolutionize Our History of Ancient America," August, 1923; "Along the Old Spanish Road in Mexico," March, 1923; "Adventuring Down the West Coast of Mexico," November, 1922; "The Foremost Intellectual Achievement of Ancient America," February, 1922; and "Along Our Side of the Mexican Border," July, 1920.

Bulletin No. 4, October 30, 1933.

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MEXICO, LIKE ROME, IS UNDERLAIN WITH RELICS OF THE PAST

While digging the foundations for a business block near the cathedral workmen uncovered seven floor levels of an ancient Aztec temple and the sides of two pyramids decorated with carved serpent heads. The Mexican Government, which is making every effort to preserve and restore ruins of the region's historic past, set the area aside for study by scientists.

There is an interesting colony of summer residents in Llandudno which the tourist rarely sees and of which he seldom hears. They are Moroccan merchant princes and their friends.

Moslem Buyers Live in Seclusion

These princes reside in England half the year, purchasing cotton goods at Manchester for the Mohammedan world. In summer they move their families to Llandudno, leasing apartments in the many "boarding residences," as the smaller hotels are called, where they dwell in more or less seclusion. Their secretaries commute 85 miles to Manchester twice a week to transact the necessary business during the dull season.

Summer sight-seers enjoy the advantage of long days in this part of Wales, and in July a newspaper or a book can be read in the open as late as 10:30 o'clock in the evening.

In contrast to the fashionable European watering places, Llandudno achieves a puritanical, not to say saintly, calm on Sunday. There is no music on the pier, motor-bus offices are closed, all inquiry booths suspend operations, it is impossible to make railway reservations, and even the ticket offices on this day are opened for only ten minutes prior to the arrival of trains. One is compelled to rest on the Day of Rest in Wales.

Note: For other photographs and data about Wales see: "A Short Visit to Wales," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1923; and "European Rural Scenes," February, 1914. Oxford, where Dr. Dodgson taught mathematics, is described in "Oxford, Mother of Anglo-Saxon Learning," November, 1929.

Bulletin No. 5, October 30, 1933.

Photograph by Robert Reid

LLANDUDNO, WITH ITS DONKEYS, IS STILL A CHILDREN'S PARADISE

It was along this beach that the author of "Alice in Wonderland" played with Dean Liddell's children. Perhaps Lewis Carroll had this bit of seacoast in mind when he described the oyster-feast of the Walrus and the Carpenter, and the lobster-quadrille of the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle!